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HERE AND THERE

New Era

Intense work is being done to condition India's land and people for the role she ambitions to play in the near future. The conditioning is largely a matter of balance : cultural pluralism and political unity ; civic freedom and economic efficiency ; national identity and international solidarity. A vital factor in this conditioning will be the medium of instruction at the University level.

The choice must be made not on a Mohenjo-Daro or a Nalanda background but in the present set up, not in the sheltered conditions of regional or peninsular isolation, but in the tense daily solidarity of to-day's scientific world. India's elite should be closely associated with the world at large in a mutual exchange of ideas, inventions and resources, whilst at the same time preserving her national identity. Her arts and her sciences should be benefited by outside contacts and should also prove beneficial to other countries. She must develop into a cultural home with a strong family

spirit and tradition, but even the homeliest of homes has doors and windows to permit and regulate contacts with other homes. It is because language is so essential to nurse and protect cultural identity, and so intimately associated with the personality of the home that the linguistic problem rouses intense feelings and can develop ugly situations. It is for the same reason that the regional language is proposed as the necessary and sole medium of instruction.

At this point, however, attention should be paid to the differences in cultural impact between language used in arts and literature and language adopted in sciences.

Newman to the Rescue

This difference is best given in a few apposite sayings of Newman when addressing University students of Dublin. "Literature expresses not objective truth, as it is called, but subjective; not things but thoughts.... (In science) words are used to express them (objects) but such words are rather symbols than language..... Science has to do with things, literature with thoughts; science is universal, literature is personal; science uses words merely as symbols, but literature uses language in its full compass, as including phraseology, idiom, style, composition, rhythm, eloquence and whatever properties are included in it."

Hence the intimate bearing of the mother-tongue in literature to maintain and develop the unique spirit of nations and communities. Not so in science which deals with things that are universal and invites the use of universal symbols. The more so that science de-

mands cold precision, immediate information and uniform meaning all over the world.

Arts and Science

Hence sane patriotism suggests caution in studying the language problem for Universities in the science departments and in the arts sections. India has sufficient resources in talent and language to build up a scientific vocabulary, classification and system peculiar to herself; but would such a bold initiative be wise and profitable? Is it not saner to adopt world-accepted systems of mensuration with their units and scales, the current classifications in botany, medicine etc, and vocabularies which are international, however clumsy or deficient they may be? More readily than politicians and literateurs, scientists are keen on making sure what they talk about in national and international discussions; words that are symbols of things should be as universal as possible when dealing with things universal, and so too measurements and classifications. Will politicians accommodate this peculiarity of our scientists?

Red Paradise

On returning from a conducted tour in Russia, a member of the Indian women's delegation proclaimed that "in Russia people have the complete joy of life without any of the frustration found in our countries." She was so engrossed, taking in the festive mood of the Red bourgeoisie that she did not read the papers nor had them translated to her. She could have found a few cases of frustration. "Machinery lies all round the railroad stations. Hay-mowers rust in the compost "

(Pravda). "The Tarangul Motor Tractor Station began its work in the fields half a month late. Not a single furrow has been made in our kolkhoze. The director of our M. T. S., Comrade Petrov, forgot to give even a single plough to our brigade" (Izvestia). These excerpts of auto-criticism relate to Kzakhstan where tens of thousands of city lads and hundreds of engineers had been dragooned to convert 32 million acres of fallow-land into a new Big Bread Basket. Stalin had failed to get what he wanted out of the peasants; the new Farmer Boss, Nikita Kruschchev, decided he would do better with enthusiastic youthful pioneers. Soon, however, reports of discontent, listless labour, broken machinery and incoherent directives reached Moscow; and Kruschchev had to rush East to see what to do, what deviation had happened and whom to purge. Of course, guests are not told about such little domestic troubles. But when the Kremlin officially complains that agricultural production was far below expectation, one is amazed to hear there is no frustration.

Frustration? On the contrary, complete joy of life. Yes, complete joy, even for those who rush the Iron Curtain to reach West Germany; complete joy among the friends and protégés of Beria; complete joy among the millions starving in concentration camps. Why then not stay in that paradise? Why come back to our land of frustration?

Candidly, our woman delegate should not tell us all this. Let her tell the marines!

A. L.

A LESSON FROM ITALY

An outline of Italy's land reform was given by P. Gasperz in "Social Action" (January & February 1952.) Two laws, passed against the opposition of both extreme left and right, covered the regions where landlordism and miserable cultivation prevailed whilst thousands of landless labourers were without work for six months in the year. They were only the first instalment of Mr. A. Fanfani's twelve-year plan to reconstruct the Italian rural world. Three years have passed since these emergency measures; a tour of the regions affected allowed us to note the progress achieved.

The "Lege Stralcio" and "Silo" (1950) gave the government the financial and juridical means to acquire every cultivable plot over 750 acres, but out of all the plots so acquired, very few held any promise of ever being changed into model farms or could have been transformed by private initiative. Most of them required large-scale and radical improvement before being turned into economic units. Often enough, the very landscape had to be altered in order that sound economic, technical, and social conditions be provided for small farming.

With a view to efficient decentralisation, the government distributed the various regions between autonomous corporations, which were called "Ente." The first task was an exhaustive land survey that would permit a redistribution of the land into economic units. The next step was a thorough study of conditions (soil, water, etc.). Then only could they plan and take in

hand the necessary improvements. The work had to be done in a hurry, three years only were allowed for the work of the "Ente" though these will remain in existence as boards of technical assistance ; in the meantime they have to evolve from official bodies into farmers' cooperative organisations.

After a general survey of conditions prevailing at the end of 1953, we will study in detail one of those "Ente" which were the maxim as it were the linchpin of the Italian land reform.

ENTE	Area (in acres)	Acres Allotted
Delta Padano	115.000	45.000
Marenima e Fucino	587.000	264.000
Pulgia e Lucania	500.000	260.000
Sila	190.000	143.000
Sardegna	205.000	40.000
Campagna	20.000	3.000
Sicilia	98.000	50.000
Others	175.000	?
	1.890.000	805.000

On the 805.000 acres already distributed, some 62.000 families (250.000 persons) are settled, the average holding of their farms being about 13 acres. Before the reform a few landlords possessed 3.5000.000 acres of cultivable land (nearly 10% of Italy's total) ; the 6.000 odd large owners were allowed to retain a fair size of land on which to live. On the other hand only 12% of the landless labourers will have land of their own at the end of the reform, which, needless to say, was never meant as a cure-all for Italy's deficiencies. Progressive industrialisation itself is greatly handicapped by a scarcity of raw materials. So that the land reform,

though not a panacea for Italy's economic ills, is a great achievement.

The "Ente Maremma" can be given as a fair instance of the work done ; it is given here because opportunities allowed us to study it on the spot. Others are equally typical of far-reaching technical work on even a larger scale ; in Sardegna for instance huge dams were built and isolated valleys were interconnected by tunnels through the hills in order to regulate the island's hydrography.

The Maremma is the formerly malarial coast some 150 miles along the hills north of Rome. The soil was volcanic and the rainfall so scanty that it was unfit for cultivation except after deep ploughing. For centuries it was left fallow land pastured by the sheep of 800 odd landlords. Of the 541.000 people living on the 12 lakh acres of arable land in 1951, two thirds were depending exclusively on agriculture ; 36% of the productive area was worked with hired labour and some 30% by small tenants ; labourers were employed 145 days of the year on an average. It was however noted that labour spent per owner-cultivated acre was double the amount spent on an acre worked with hired labour (18 days vs. 9.). In 1952, 547.000 acres were secured by public acquisition ; compensation was calculated on the value formerly declared for land-tax ; one fourth was paid in cash, the rest was to be paid in twenty-five years in state-bonds carrying 5 % interest. Over sixty percent of the acquired land was divided into family holdings ; the rest was made into smaller plots that would supplement the income of the smallest farmers

or of hired labourers. After a trial of three years the allotment would be final (up to now only six cases of maladjustment were reported). Payment by the settled farmers is made in thirty yearly instalments ; the instalment amounts to one day's wage of a labourer per acre for the first two years, and to three days wage for the remaining 28 years. This comes to about 6 percent of the gross revenue per acre ; in the same region rents amounted to between 15 and 20 percent of the gross income. The "Ente" retains the ownership of the land until the last payment is made. Except the case of direct inheritance, the new owner must either keep his holding or surrender it to the Ente, in which case he gets a refund of what he spent, annuities and improvements, on the land. The farm is then turned over to another applicant.

The owners-to-be were selected among the local population. A certain preference was shown to former tenants who had improved their land. More than half the area went to the "bracchianti", (rural proletarians). Size and composition of the family of the applicant were taken into consideration, individual choice was attended to, but by and large the allotment was drawn by lot. Of course Communists did not fail to allege bribery and favouritism, as is their wont, but enquiries on the spot showed the allegations were false. I interviewed many a peasant of leftist affiliation and every one of them spontaneously declared that the distribution had been fair.

Capital expenditure on the Mariemma project is estimated at the equivalent of seventy crores of rupees,

and will be spread over ten years. Much has already been spent since considerable work had to be made before the land could be brought under the plough. First the soil itself had to be improved. The water system was wretched, rain water could not be held back whilst many places were water-logged in winter. On the one hand the water-retaining capacity of the soil had to be increased, and on the other superfluous water had to be quickly drained. The first step was deep ploughing ; from well-situated mechanical centres, 270 powerful tractors (140 H.P.) went out to plough the land three or four feet deep ; dynamite sticks blew up rocks, bulldozers levelled the land and cut drainage ditches. Hundreds of miles of ditches and drains were necessary to regulate the flow of water, huge ripping machines (2 to 6 tons) went up and down bringing out the rocks, breaking up the pasture-hardened volcanic crust, aerating the top soil which would soon be luxuriating with wheat and clover.

All that work was done by local labour, barring the Fiat-trained technicians of the tractor-parks ; these drivers and mechanics are now under the direction of the Ente but the machine-parks are to be gradually absorbed by the farmer-owner cooperative that will take over the two thousand tractors along with the workshops. The light material will be owned by private farmers. The unskilled labour was done by the prospective owners themselves ; they were in receipt of a normal wage but worked with the enthusiasm of people who are aware that they build their own future. When I was going through the green promising fields, I was

amazed at the huge piles of stones which stood as silent witnesses of man's toil.

This basic work was carried out throughout the project area. Many limited irrigation schemes were planned; several are still in the blue-print stage, but already many water thousands of acres of garden land, particularly in the neighbourhood of towns. Tree screens were aligned against the salt-laden winds from the sea; the tree-belt thirty feet in breadth runs along five hundred miles of the sea-coast and counts no less than five million saplings whilst another million make secondary screens here and there.

So much about the land. What of the people? Formerly they were living in villages bordering the large estates. It would be desirable for them to live on or close to their own land. Three thousand cottages have been built and occupied; another seven thousand are in course of construction. One can easily make out the new settlements from the white-washed cottages dotting the green fields. Neat little houses they are: as a minimum, three rooms, kitchen, toilet and shower-bath, store-room, stable, pigsty, hencoop and large shed. More accommodation is provided for large families. Here and there stands out a silo built by the individual farmer with the financial and technical help of the Ente. Houses and stables have been planned so as to allow additions and enlargement, but their style meets the artistic impulses of the Italian peasant. The formerly uninhabited estate is now alive with nine rural centres: church, school, dispensary, post-office, shops

and residential quarters for the staff of the public utility services. They are the nuclei of future boroughs.

Electricity is brought to houses and workshops ; water is supplied by tube-wells near every house, except the region of Grossetto which has to rely on an aqueduct bringing spring water from Mount Amiata. A network of roads connects all villages and houses, an enormous task of hundreds of miles of road-building.

Along with a new soil, and new settlements, a new type of exploitation had to be devised. From sheep farming and cereal growing there was a shunting towards a more complex and more balanced economy. The area given to cereals was considerably reduced but a thirty-five percent increase in yield kept up the production level. Crop rotation with priority to green fodder has been introduced and meat-and-milch cattle have displaced work-cattle which are replaced by tractors (one per 150 acres) ; new breeds are crossed with the local variety which was of sturdy but unproductive stock. Vegetables and fruit-trees take more and more space, especially close to the town-markets ; olive trees now cover the hill-sides which suit them best. Poultry is on the increase ; in 1952 18,000 chickens and 35,000 eggs of choice stocks were distributed. And so on ; the list of minor benefits due to the Ente's initiative is endless.

Improved soil, improved tools, improved stock, all implied improved labour. The ancient "bracchianti" knew only routine work and were paralysed by peasant conservatism. Hundreds of centres were opened all over the land and rural education given a new start ;

the courses ranged from general instruction to bee-keeping and tractor repairs; women were given suitable courses in domestic economy. The teaching was made concrete, and practical with suitable experiments and demonstrations. Proof by success was the key to efficient education. Under the Ente's technicians, peasants were directed to attempt new crops and new ventures and success swept away their native diffidence. A like method was followed with the cooperatives which are compulsory until payment of the last annuity. At present there are forty-eight under the guidance of the Ente, which prove their worth in the conditions of prices and qualities of goods and cattle-heads. Consumers cooperative have also been floated and they are to cover transport, machinery, dairy-products, oil pressing, canning etc. and finally the water and electricity supply. Cooperation is now part and parcel of the peasant's faith.

Since the Italian land-reform has proved successful, it may be worth our while to bring out the leading factors which made for its success. First the reform was most carefully planned and detailed attention was given to local conditions rather than to theoretical rules. On the legal side, due caution was taken to avoid what happened elsewhere, namely, the selling or mortgaging of holdings by the new settlers. This would have wrecked the reform; yet it would have been unavoidable if the settler had been unable to make a living on their allotment. And he would unavoidably been forced to do so, had he not been provided with a sufficient plot and with the necessary seeds and implements. The

family holding was taken as the measure of the holding, due account being given to size, situation, soil quality and water supply, and suitable advice and assistance being available.

Let us stress in passing that there was no paternalism or totalitarianism in the methods followed. The officials and technicians of the Ente were keen to have the peasants themselves finding out, deciding and carrying out improvements, and they refrained from forcing help and advice on the settlers. They were clear in their mind that the sooner any improvement or service was passed on to the settlers, the better it was. At the same time they guarded against the traditional individualism of the owner-farmer who is apt to turn into a minor lord and to escape the responsibilities of community-life; compulsory membership of multipurpose-cooperatives is an effective precaution. The continuous and lasting contact between officials and peasants was an untold boon as well as the tempo of the reform itself. It was striking to see all officials, engineers, tractor-drivers and clerks, taking pride in their work and aware that they were carrying out a positive, unambiguous and gigantic task of reconstruction. It was no less a pleasure to witness the farmers comparing the results of the year with the output of the past and to plan and discuss further improvements. The last condition of success was the spirit of the reform; it was to be the human rehabilitation of the *bracchianti* which could not be sacrificed to any political or party interest. Quite possibly a few parliamentarians voted the reform out of fear of communism, but the men who

planned the reform in the secret of the fascist regime or of the want years were genuinely guided by their Christian and humanist principles. In the Maremma Ente we have an embodiment of these principles, an embodiment which stands as a monument to their clarity of vision and singleness of purpose, and as a model to similar reforms which many countries demand. Some of India's regions like the dry and rocky tracts of the Deccan might take a lesson from Italy.

G. Beckers

THE PEOPLE'S MONEY

The Perambur-bound bus came to a stop in front of the Central Station, Madras. A group of twelve students on a Government-sponsored tour of the city boarded the bus and, one of the students, apparently the leader, asked his companions, "What shall we pay for the ride?" Two or three voices from the student-group replied, "As much as you please, because it is only Government money!" The answer of these students is typical of the attitude of so many people towards financial transactions of the Government, which are so little understood by the majority. It would, in fact, have been interesting to enquire of these youngmen how the Government raised the funds for their tour, and then, to show them, in terms of social cost, the price paid by the people to make this money available.

This is why Mr. Colin Clark's book, *Welfare and Taxation* ⁽¹⁾ does a great service, not only to the British public for whom the book is written, but also to the peoples of all countries burdened with a system of taxation, which is relentlessly pursued on the pretext of providing for the wants of the common people. Perhaps, the dangers which result from such a policy of taxation are greater in less developed countries, like India, where the abject poverty of the masses appear to demand Government control of all resources through taxation, and where, on the other hand, the low level of literacy makes it impossible for the people to exercise any effective control on the way in which Government spends the people's money.

Where The Money Comes From

Breaking through the purely academic trappings of theories of taxation, Mr. Colin Clark easily dissipates the illusion and fallacy which tends to maintain that the Government provides "free services" for its citizens. In reality, there is nothing "free" in the educational, medical, health and other services provided by the Government of any country, for the simple reason that the ordinary citizen pays for all these services by means of a system of taxation, both direct and indirect. And the Socialist experiment in Britain has amply proved that the average working-class family is paying to the Government, in taxes, a good deal more than it gets back in social services. The net result,

(1) *Catholic Social Guild*, 125, Woodstock Rd., Oxford, England, 1954, 80 pp. 3sh. 6d.

therefore, of this system of taxation leads to a feeling of frustration, and a lowering of production in the country.

The existence of very high taxation, Indeed, hits every section of the community, and tends to cripple the productive effort of the country. In this way, any system of excessive taxation defeats its own purpose. It is a commonplace, that such taxation, as is already being experienced in India, tends to dry up the sources of investment, so necessary to production ; moreover, businessmen and workers seeing so much of their hard earned money taken away to pay the bills of the Government feel any further effort hardly worth while, and so production slows down, this in turn affects incomes all round, and finally reduces the whole income of the country, and lowers the standard of living. Perhaps the hardest hit is the low income wage-earner who, though he may escape having to pay income-tax, still sees such a large part of his small earnings drained away by the forced contribution he must make to the Government Treasury in the form of indirect taxes under the guise of high prices.

Unfortunately in India we have not yet detailed statistics to show the incidence of indirect taxation on the different sections of the people ; yet, we may arrive at some idea of the burden of indirect taxation carried by the average small wage-earners by examining the amount of money taken away only in revenue and excise duties by Government on some of the most common articles of daily use in an average working class family. Thus, in the 1945-1955 Union Budget,

the estimated amount paid away by the people in revenue duties and Union excise duties on the most common items of consumption in an average working-class household, reads as follows :—

I. Revenue Duties ¹ (in lakhs of rupees)

Tobacco	2,00	Electric bulbs	30
Beetle nut	5,00	Toys, games, sports goods	5
Kerosene oil	7,00	Cycles	1,25

II. Union Excise Duties (in lakhs or rupees)

Tobacco	35,00	Vegetable products	2,75
Matches	9,00	Tea	3,50
Kerosene oil	25,00	Coal cess	2,20
		Cotton cloth	20,00

Calculated in terms of the Union Budget Rupee, each citizen of the Indian Union pays As. 6 as Customs Duty, and As. 3 p. 6 as Union Excise Duty in the rupee. Even so, the picture of indirect taxes is not complete; different Indian States levy a Sales Tax (thus increasing the amount of indirect taxes) on some of the most common items of consumption, such as cloth, soap, medicines, wood, meat, fish, eggs, vegetables and fruits, and often an entertainment duty. The Sales Tax was first imposed in the State of Madras in 1939-40, and later spread to every class "A" States of the Indian Union. At first rates were universally moderate, and food grains and other necessities of life were exempt, as also industrial raw materials, bullion and exports from the areas. In some States, today, all these are now taxed. In 1949-50, the revenue from Sales Tax levied in all class "A" States came to

¹ *Eastern Economist* March 3, 1954.

Rs. 38.30 crores.² Given, therefore, Rs. 678-Rs. 1,480 as the average *yearly* earnings of the ordinary worker with a family of three children, it needs no great imagination to understand the struggle he must experience to feed, clothe, shelter and educate his family !

Where the Money Goes

When he comes to examine Public Expenditure, that is, how the Government uses the people's money, Mr. Colin Clark makes a very clear and often neglected distinction between the money needed for essential general duties of Government, and money spent on services which could be more efficiently managed by the people themselves. This distinction is more important today, as the growing activities of the Modern State tend to swallow up every type of human activity. Under the general duties of Government, Mr. Colin Clark would place general administration, Defence, maintenance of Law and Order, Tax collection, Public Health, Communications and similar services, which by their very nature are best managed by the Government. There is not much scope for reducing public expenditure on these services; for the "social services", however, which fall outside the essential duties of Government, Mr. Colin Clark finds, that the British Public "are paying in taxation a sum very much greater than the cost of the social services that they are at present receiving."

In India, and speaking in general, some taxes are collected by the Union Government (Union List), and

² *Public Finance Surveys, India.* United Nations, New York, 1951.

others by the State Governments (State List), and the primary purpose for which this money is taken from the people, is to carry on the general duties of the Union and State Governments. But this is not all the expenditure which faces the Union and State Governments. Due to conditions after Independence, and the millions of refugees in need of rehabilitation, and the need of building up the economic strength of the country, money has had to be found for these items also. While it is true that a certain proportion of this financial demand has been met from outside, by the Colombo Plan, the American Point Four and other schemes, yet, the ordinary citizen has not escaped paying his share. And this has led, as someone has put it to "an orgy of taxation and waste"! As recently as March 1954, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, is reported to have said that new taxes are imposed without much consideration, while speaking at the annual meeting of the Punjab and Delhi Chamber of Commerce. A month later, M. A. Chidambaram, President of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce, said, "The Death Duties or Estate Duties and the duties on agricultural income will certainly act as serious deterrents to the progress of agriculture, and must ultimately kill the goose that lays the golden egg." He went on to deplore the fact, that "Not the least regard is paid to the wasteful public expenditure, or to the reaction in cost of living and in price levels which have been clogging the economy of the country during and since the war."

The phenomenal proportions to which public expenditure, both of the Union and State Governments,

have reached may easily be gathered from a glance at the Budget Estimates since Independence. Taking at random the States Budget for this year, we find that out of eleven States, only Bombay estimates a nominal surplus of Rs. 16 lakhs, while others expect deficits ranging from Rs. 47 lakhs to Rs. 1,232 lakhs! In the State of Madras, alone, the increase of public expenditure from Rs. 16 crores in 1937 for an undivided Madras, to Rs. 45 crores in 1954 for the residuary State is significant of the expansion of public expenditure. While the average common man would willingly pay his share towards the development of the country, he cannot but be alarmed when he sees the Government overreaching itself by taking on duties outside its proper sphere in pursuit of some vague and ill defined entity known as the Welfare State. In reality and in practice the average citizen only sees a too optimistic development programme, more taxes to meet greater expenditure, a lowering of his already miserable standard of living and a fearful waste of the people's hard earned money!

To take, at random, but two examples of what the common man would call a waste of his money. In the State of Madras, despite the fact that Khadi was not wanted by the people — consumers found it costly and non-durable, wages were low and no one wanted to spin — the Government launched the Khadi Development scheme. In 1947, 1948 and 1949 the Government spent nearly Rs. 37½ lakhs to produce 21.08 lakh yards of Khadi, although as much mill textiles could have been bought with half that sum. In 1948-1949 alone the expenditure was Rs. 13.35 lakhs while the receipts

were only 7.59. Stocks then accumulated, and yet the Government decided to spend more, and raised the grants for the Khadi scheme to Rs. 20.21 lakhs in 1951! In April this year the common man was shocked to learn that all was not well with the great and much advertised multi-purpose Damodar Valley Project. The Enquiry Committee presided over by Mr. P. S. Rau revealed that there was a good deal of mismanagement of the D. V. C leading to a loss of Rs. 1.64 crores in the Konar Project alone. For two-and-a-half years the Corporation was without a chief engineer, and the result has been the lack of expert advice, frequent changes of design, increase in costs and wastage of public money. Surely, no customer could trust any business firm conducted on these lines.

The Danger of Totalitarianism

In such circumstances few would deny that the common man has a just grievance when he discovers that, on the one hand, he is forced to sacrifice a large share of his small income in the name of taxes, and on the other, there is so reckless a waste of his money! But this is not all, for, as Mr. Colin Clark points out, due to the increasing activity of the State, and the growing control it tends to establish over every aspect of human life, there is need for a "radical revision of our ideas of the State." In underdeveloped countries, especially, in which the State must, of necessity, play a major role in building up the economic power of the country, it becomes all too easy for the common man to acquire the habit of looking to the State for the satisfaction of all his wants, thus making the State

like a benevolent Santa Claus. But this way lies the road to Totalitarianism ! History has amply proved that when the ordinary citizen signs away more and more of his own political and economic power into the hands of the State, the more does he become a slave to the State. And, it is just as true that the first step towards such an enslavement is the gradual, and perhaps, unconscious regimentation and shaping of the peoples' pattern of life and conduct by means of taxation.

At a time when India is struggling to build up her economic and political strength, and when there is imperative need for correction principles, Mr. Colin Clark's book may well serve as a very useful guide, to fashion the young Republic along lines which will add to her glory and the true welfare and freedom of her peoples.

C. C. Clump.

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT ?

The achievements of the so-called marshal races of India have been recorded in golden letters in the pages of Indian history. They are rightly found in every text book and are known to every student. But the achievements of other brave races in India are conspicuous by their absence in those text books as if history was made up only of kings and dynasties of a few select races.

Even presently feats of valour and daring are daily displayed on the turbulent Arabian sea by India's bravest people : the fishermen of the West Coast. The courage displayed by those fishermen are matched nowhere in India. The coast remains isolated. The fishermen are the lost battalions. People are interested in fish but who cares about the fishermen ? Yet few people suspect the nobility that shines from the eyes of these people even whilst living in the most miserable huts on the white sands of the Indian shores, in the most neglected and in the most overpopulated areas of India. If you want to be thrilled by a people that believes in courage, loyalty, sincerity, faith, go to the fishery coast of Western India. No scouts on earth are braver than are their youngsters riding the waves and scouting the sea. No women in India are more valiant in the face of danger, suffering and death. Incidentally my contact with fishermen in India and in other parts of the world, has made me better understand why the Lord Jesus chose fishermen as his earliest apostles and not *v.g.* professional soldiers, lawyers or politicians. He was in need of the cream of the earth — of honest and brave people and none can beat the fishermen in these great virtues. Incidentally it may also be mentioned it was a fisherman — or was it *the* fisherman as the first Pope and his successors were called ? — who started the great cooperative of fishermen on earth. Mischievous tongues have it that his salesman's instinct forced the union people of his boat to eat fish on Fridays and other occasions. As a matter of fact, *the* fisherman did not worry any more about fish after he

had looked into the eye of the risen Christ and had been forgiven.

During Holy Week viz. : Passion Week, 1954 I found myself at Cape Comorin at the end of a two months' tour of India's great Community Projects ; a double task had been given me viz. : a study tour and a campaign of organising cooperation with the Community Projects as arranged by the Social Institute, Poona in close consultation with the All-India Honorary Administrator of Community Projects : Shri Dey.

As I stood near Cape Comorin I saw reflected in the skies and in the waves India's southernmost Church where Tamil fishermen worship Our Lady under the title of Our Lady of Beauty "Alangara Mada." The back-ground of the seas and of the skies was ablaze with gold and silver. Out of that blaze came rowing a fisherboat making for the shore. I can never forget the boatman. He was returning from a two days' trek into the sea exhausted. He stood on a raft of beams chiselled and tied up into the shape of a boat. The waves beat right through the raft. His eyes glowed even more than the blaze around. He smiled on a poor catch of fish. Fish famine continued unabated. Whilst parking his boat in silence on the sands, the urchins looked on in their throngs and cheered him. Due to the season of Holy Week, the beams of that raft forcibly reminded me of the beams of the cross, the fish, called in Greek 'IXTUS', of the very letters of the Saviour's name and the fisherman, against the red sky brought back to me the image of the crucified. Economically speaking the fisherman in fact

is crucified. He is crucified by the middlemen who trade on his helplessness to preserve fish or on his indebtedness in his desire to survive at all during the fish-famines of the years. The fisherman is crucified also by his own "defauts de ses qualites", defects of his qualities. His very sense of freedom and independence makes it difficult for him to unite and get the best market-value for his fish through cooperation. All along the coast I visited numerous fishermen villages who are badly housed, hungry, deprived of drinking water and of proper sanitary arrangements and who are exploited and ground between two "jatas" all because they lack proper cooperatives. These fishermen of Travancore-Cochin reminded me of the fishermen of the Maritime Provinces in Canada whom I visited in 1947. They too were at first disunited, exploited, oppressed, isolated until the famous Mgr. Coady of the St. Francis Xavier University Extension Department, New Brunswick, took up the challenge of poverty, oppression and exploitation. His famous Antigonish Movement is too well known, also in India's social text books, to require any new description. Suffice it to say that his cooperatives of fishermen have been watched by the whole world and are rightly recorded as models of what can be achieved by an enlightened cooperative movement among fishermen. In 1951 at New Delhi a leading member of the Planning Commission expressed to me his intention of asking Shri J. Nehru to fly out Mgr. Coady to come and 'help us to organise the fishermen.' The health of Mgr. Coady was the chief obstacle. May I hope that some of his assistants will come out, if invited?

The present study is a challenge both to the private agencies and to the Government to join hands and to help in organising the fishermen without further delay in well-knit and well-federated cooperatives of free fishermen, and to equip them with the latest technical improvements compatible with India's constitution. My interview with the Minister of the Fisheries of Travancore-Cochin, Mr. Raja Pillai, at Trivandrum and my subsequent dealings with him on behalf of certain fishermen's cooperatives of Quilon have confirmed me in my opinion that fishermen had never a better friend in Government and a better chance of improving their status than at present. He has pledged his whole-hearted support to all fishermen's cooperatives. Through them he would immediately improve the housing, the supply of drinking water and the very cooperatives themselves. The centre too is willing to help and is making valuable tests through the Norwegian Experimental Station near Quilon. But much more has to be achieved if we want to raise the standard of living of the fishermen substantially. This is an S.O.S. The numerous Indian priests and the Catholic Bishops of the fishermen have achieved records of social service among the fishermen. The Christian Church has been throughout the centuries the source of untold consolation. In the darkest hours of hunger and despair the Christian Church has throughout the centuries saved them from hunger and despair. Especially in education, the Church has rendered yeoman services. The thriving schools next to each Church are the best proof of this statement. Yet now the time has come to tackle

the social problem in all its aspects and not in its literary or educational aspect alone. The fishermen have to be organised at once into cooperatives to be able to claim their share in the available funds of the community Project and in the funds for fishermen's improvement earmarked both by the State and the Union. Fishermen have to be better fed, better housed, better supported with medical aid, better equipped with technical up-to-date improvements in catching more fish and in getting a better price for their catch. Great Catholic priests of the fishery coast, here a challenge for each one of you ! The great Catholic Bishops of the West Coast will find here an unique opportunity of translating the Papal Encyclical into reality. Great fishermen of the West Coast, this is the time to awaken and to prepare for yourselves and for your children, better lives not only spiritually but also socially and economically. Both the Government of Travancore-Cochin and of the Union have a great responsibility in keeping the fishermen right in the centre of their plans and not to shift their interests to an eleventh hour afterthought. The Catholic Church is bound by vocation to be loyal to the fishermen, to the Government and to India.

In my semi-official report 1954 on the Community Projects on the West Coast I referred to the fishermen outlining their present situation as follows :-

With regard to the fishermen of the West Coast they are presently among the most neglected and among the most exploited people of India. There is a fish famine all along the coast which has been lasting

for several months and which the fishermen partly ascribe as due to the deep fishing operations being directed from Ceylon and also from certain coastal centres in India. Few fishermen are organised in efficient co-operatives and most of them are shamefully exploited by the middle men and by the loan sharks all along the coast. Their greatest need is :-

(1) To organise into efficient co-operatives so as to raise their annual income which is for the present only Rs. 280/- per fisherman's family.

(2) These co-operatives ought to be inspired, and if possible led, by the leaders of the great Antagonish Movement in Canada through which poor forlorn farmers, fishermen and coalminers have been able to reconstruct their lives on a higher social and economic level. May I remind the Planning Committee of their intention, expressed two years ago, at New Delhi that they wished to fly out to India, one of the great leaders of that movement in the Maritime Provinces of Canada in order to come and help in organising the fishermen all along the coast from Bombay to Cape Comorin ?

(3) The famine-stricken fishermen need urgent economic relief and fishery development is the best possible means for the economic uplift of the fishing community. They are short of capital. They stand in need of capital to buy fishing equipment to catch more fish. There seems to be no provision in the Community Development Project for financial assistance to the famine stricken fishermen, there seems to be no fishery development plan besides what is being achieved by the Norwegian Mission near Quilon which promises to offer

very good results as an experimental centre only. For the rest indiscriminate fish-curing yards are of little service to the fishing community. Loans to the fishing co-operatives cannot be distributed for they have no assets to offer as securities. To help the fishermen departmental opposition must be removed. The following equipments may be given: Mother vessel one, Launches 10; new type of boats with motor should be supplied at a nominal price on a large scale so as to secure for the fishermen more time for the actual fishing deep into the sea. The new model of motor boats proposed by the Norwegian mission seems to find the approval of the fishermen of the coast. Raw material for developing boat-building and net-making as cottage industries (as recommended by the co-operative Registrar) may be supplied, a Break-water at Chavarakodi may be built, loans to fishing co-operatives given and two fish curing yards established at Chavarakodi. Arrangements for cold storage and canning should be made by the government and put at the service of the fishermen's co-operatives.

(4) Above all schools should be established all along the coast for the training of better fishermen who will be equipped with technical knowledge of how to run a co-operative and on how to catch more fish.

It should be noted that the central aim of the fishery policy of the Norwegian Government may be summarised as an aid to self-help, to help the fishermen to help themselves. All funds advanced by Government were given to fishermen organisations and special banks. Government's part in the development of

fisheries and raising the standard of living of fishermen has been one of regulation and supervision. Fishermen were never drilled or dictated to by Government officials. The financial help and this method of working by the Government on the one side and the initiative taken by fishermen through their cooperative organisations on the other, have made it possible, within a few years time for the fishermen to stabilise their income and reach a higher standard of living. One can say that the financial help given by the Government brought in all round progress much sooner than most people expected. The main reason for this sudden improvement was due to the organisation of fishing, the supply of fishing implements and the fish industry on a cooperative basis.

It is my firm conviction that if properly helped Travancore-Cochin State even alone has all the possibilities to become the Norway of India. Both Norway and Canada have given the lead. The inspiration of their achievements combined with the sterling qualities of the Indian fishermen will build up the greatest and most productive home industry of modern India.

In conclusion may I plead that the plans for the new housing schemes for fishermen will provide for at least as much flooring space as they had in their previous huts? In case the houses to be built are given in contract, as for instance at Cape Comorin, outside C. P. area, may I suggest that the contractors be checked properly. The houses of Cape Comorin are cracking all over already for want of proper foundations. May I also suggest that every fisherman's house stands sepa-

rate from his neighbour's so as to avoid the impression of building soldiers' barracks which is not congenial to the freedom loving spirit of the fishermen.

Fishermen have a great role to play in Renascent India. Fishermen of India should unite, awaken and open a new page of happiness and prosperity for themselves, for your children and for your motherland.

E. De Meulder

CULTURAL CLOAK

Soviet missions have become trite in their variety : Commercial, Scientific, Economical, Cultural, Health and only God knows what. The most recent one was the Cultural Delegation returned to the People's Paradise and praised and rewarded or purged as the case deserved. But our Communists, fellow-travellers and the soft-brained pseudo-intellectuals and artists, both red and pink, have not yet finished singing the praises of this group of subtle propagandists. Even before the arrival of the cultural delegation, their admirers and satellites in India were blaring forth the supposed virtues and qualities of the expected artists. They capped their propaganda with something one Indian Minister has said somewhere : "One of the ways of bringing about understanding and friendship between nations is to foster cultural relations." In the abstract cultural exchanges are good and wholesome and to a certain extent necessary between nations ; but this does not

in any way warrant or justify the subtle red propaganda under the name of culture and art.

Malenkov, with the mantle of Stalin on him, set about first and foremost to consolidate his position. The great purger, Beria, with his sycophants was purged. Even the Encyclopaedias did not escape the effects of his super-purge. When the throne could at last feel the full weight of his ample form, Malenkov looked about and found that he too like Stalin had too much of culture in the Soviet Paradise. And right across the border the poor uncultured Indians are starved to death of culture and aesthetics. May be the people's champions might have asked their great demi-god comrade to send along a cultural delegation. The delegation was at any rate well-timed. There were the test elections in Travancore-Cochin. If the experiment met with success, then it could very well be repeated when India would be going to the polls for the general elections within a year or so. The artists were well-chosen too. The best qualification, however, seems to have been devotion to the party; they did not want art for art's sake. That was bourgeois superstition; what is the use of art if it does not help on the progress of dialectical materialism. It is very well for fellow-travellers to shout that there was no regimentation; facts prove what their words try to deny. One of the artistes was a deputy of the Supreme Soviet; who else could keep a better watch that the members do not deviate from the path marked out for them? Or who else could be a better instrument of transmitting the

messages to the comrades hard at work to liberate India ?

What is the impression of the people in general in India about this cultural delegation ? Well, what impression do you get when you see a hawker selling fly-covered sweetmeats on the open road at a time when the whole city is in the grip of cholera ? Well, the case of the cultural delegation is not very dissimilar. Sooner or later even the most oily politicians would have to admit that the real enemy of India's hard-won freedom is Communism. And unless and until our leaders understand the gravity of this evil and fight it in the proper way, the chains of universal serfdom will slowly encircle the masses in India, and the history of our heroic struggle for freedom, and the hard-won independence, and the immense sacrifice of our people and leaders in money and in lives, will be relegated to the realm of bourgeois legends.

It is claimed that the tour of the cultural delegation was a tremendous success judging from the crowds they drew. They were given civic receptions in many cities. Great and big people sang their praises in public receptions and in the columns of the red and pink papers. All this is very good, and might be another feather in the cap of the excellence of soviet art and culture ? Doesn't all this prove the firm faith proclaimed by the artists in the excellence of the people's art and culture ? For, they said in the handbills they published : " We believe firmly that art is universal ; but the best and noblest art is that of people." Of course we have to understand here by the word people, the communist

people. But in spite of all this noise and outward show, even the most enthusiastic admirers could not fail to admit a few points which however gave the whole show away indicating that after all there was some catch somewhere.

The standard of performance was of course high as reported in most of our papers. Still, there were one or two catches here and there. In the words of a reporter, pink to judge him from his other remarks, some of the items did not come up very much to the expected standards. For instance note the following :-

— *Music* : After the interval the pianist played 'en-tree' and 'broken song' and these two pieces did not attract the audience much, either because they were not good or because the audience did not understand them.... A Spanish song by a Stalin prize-winner did not seem to have even the grace of and charm of an ordinary English film-song. All the same, the reporter would like us believe that the song must have been of a high artistic quality ; otherwise how to explain the winning of a Stalin prize ?

— *Dance* : Russian culture was supposed to be exhibited in its highest form in the dance numbers of the entertainment programme. They wanted to teach the Indians how to give a real dance.... India is famed for dances of all kinds, classical and non classical. But the Indian dancers have not lost all sense of shame and modesty ; so far none of them have appeared on the stage so scantily attired as their Russian comrades. But then, they have not yet given up the bourgeois ideas of art and culture. The aim of the cultural de-

legation is to liberate them from the so called sense of shame, modesty etc. Why to hide talent and skill under bourgeois traditional ideas of virtue, morality and modesty ?

To show themselves one with the spirit of the people of India the Russian artists did another wonderful thing. When they were given a reception by a noted Indian artist, the guests appeared in Indian costumes ; gossamer sarees, bangles and flower-crowned heads. Such a parade was indeed intended to ravish the hearts of the poor Indian onlookers.

In spite of the persuasiveness of the report, truth sticks out in many places and the reporter says that most of the dances had not much of art in them but they could very well be compared to the acrobatic feats of circus men and women ; and since India abounds in circus artists, the reporter had to admit that after all these ambassadors of Russian culture and art did not make much of an impression.

With traditional oriental hospitality Indians treated the visitors well.... but in cauda venenum. Why did the Premier of Ceylon cry out against cultural delegations ? He had the cheek to tell the Chinese cultural delegation, that he was satisfied with Chinese rice in exchange for Ceylonese rubber, but as regards cultural exchanges, he would have none of it. It will serve them right if the Ceylonese are going to be starved of Red culture and art. We don't know whether the Soviet delegation did invite itself to Ceylon ; may be from the bitter experience of the sister Chinese delegation, and may be also from the stern warnings served

out to their ambassador while he was there against hotel conferences etc., they judged it more prudent not even to ask permission to visit the island.

Keeping up the cultural ties ? But who is to do it ? It will be alright for red and pink Indian artists to visit and make well escorted culture tours to Soviet show cases within the people's paradise. But what about their Russian counterpart ? Will they ever again hear of them ? If Malenkov, the supreme soviet artist, is pleased and satisfied with their achievements and exploits and valuable contacts in India, they might hope to live at least. But if he fears that they will be contaminated by their keeping in touch with people in India, even if he knows that their friends are red or at least pink, then the supreme soviet artist will have nothing to do with the Indian reactionaries. And further, whom can he trust in these days, when even the pillars of the firmament to totter and fall ? Strange and wonderful how such a lackey of capitalism as Beria hid his face so long and managed to be rewarded and honoured in such a lavish scale by the leaders of the people. Hoodwinking can go far. As regards India, return visits will profit Indians nothing. One of the leaders of a so-called Indian cultural delegation to the soviet paradise and the Chinese hinterland was a man stone deaf and completely innocent of any of the languages of these countries ; on his return the reds made capital of his provincial prestige. This same man had no shame to break forth in verse and song in praise of the Chinkies and publish this abomination of lies and sycophancy as the first feature of a Special number of

a widely circulated vernacular weekly, dedicated to singing the praises of the Indian Republic.

Up is down ; truth is falsehood ; light is darkness ; so go the dialectics of materialism. No wonder then that Indians who have not yet lost all spiritual values, and who are not yet accustomed to look at things through the dialectic peephole do not see eye to eye with Malenkov the supreme soviet artist and his sycophants both within and without our country.

S. Fernandes

SOCIAL SURVEY

AHIMSA

By the voice of Pandit Nehru, and Dr. Y. Radhakrishna, India has again reaffirmed her faith in ahimsa as the solution of all the ills of the present world. But if everybody seems to agree on the efficacy of this weapon in the ideological order it does not mean that in the practical one precautions are not taken to answer war eventualities "si vis pacem para bellum. If you want peace, prepare for war," said the old Latin proverb. All the great States of the Union except West Bengal which had no time enough to consider the question have agreed to the compulsory enlisting of Government officials in the Territorial Army in case the number of volunteers does not reach the expected number. Some will say that this compulsory enlisting

shows that many of the Government officials can be dispensed with since in case of emergency they are called to the colours.

Facilities for shooting practices will be offered in any police station having a field for shooting. Bellicose Mahasabhites will not be the last to avail themselves of this opportunity to defend India, but some of them with pro-bovid scruples will never score a bull's eye.

In any case, we have to note the first among the nine points exposed by the Mahasabha Secretary, V. G. Deshpande. The first point is in favour of an alliance with Soviet Russia ; and the denunciation of the neutral policy of India. Leaving aside the other suggestions to the responsible chiefs of the Army about how to defend India we find at the end an appeal to militarize Hindustan through compulsory education and to Hinduize the nation through the system of suddhi or purification, and of course banning the foreign missionaries. This declaration will come as a shock to those who hope to see Hinduism as the only force able to resist Marxism. Since the purest of the pure among the Hindus call for an alliance with the arch-enemy of any religious system. This alliance would reduce the other suggestions to ashes. Those outbursts of Mahasabha feelings should be remembered.

YOUTH

More realistic appears the reorganization of the National Cadet Corps, replaced by the Auxiliary Cadet Corps, and open to boys and girls from the age of 12 to 20. In the State of Bombay 2000 teachers will receive

a 13-day training making them fit to handle the formation of the youth who will have to undergo eight periods of 40 minutes a week and will build up their morale as well as physique, of team spirit, cooperative life, self-confidence, social service and dignity of labour. In Bombay State about 100,000 pupils will benefit by this training. We wish the venture good success, but the real team spirit will never be created unless many taboos on food are discarded.

That the morale of youth has to be raised is clearly seen in the declaration coming from the authorities of Lucknow. They complain that 40% of the pupils copy in the S. L. C. and Inter Exams and manhandled the supervisors who want to do their duty. Some managed also to get the question papers in advance.

In ever green Malabar leaves grow on trees each season ; new ones grew in the High School Book showing the ill-will of examiners. The new ones carried high percentage marks in every subject. Unluckily the police has stopped the trade. Some of the Students who have benefitted by it are reported to do quite well in the University and Government services. If it had been given more rope the experiment would have been an argument to prove the futility of examinations.

Everybody is busy with questions of education, even Acharya Bhawe, who satisfied doubtless to see the leader of the Socialist Party renouncing any political activities to devote himself to the Bhoodhan, starts at Bodh Gaya an International centre of culture, the samavaya ashram or school of synthesis, to make a synthesis

of Buddhism and Vedantism and unify altogether all religions, and thus help to solve the social question.

LABOUR

We are still far from the two goals marked out by the Acharya. Shri V. V. Giri the Minister of Labour, gave sound advice to the trade unionists when he told them to train themselves with other technicians representing the employers. But this cannot be done in a day and supposes with a good primary education, a specialized course in social questions. If an employer turns recalcitrant direct action should be thought of, but in the last resort strikes could be declared.

Is that appeal to "direct action" which led the dockers of Calcutta to strike work for few hours because one of their own had received a slap? But the go-slow process in the unloading in this port has a deeper cause. Only 2,000 of the 10,000 gangmen are given regular work. The number of gangmen increased phenomenally during war time and is now out of proportion with the traffic. The workers think that nationalization is the real remedy to the woes. It does not appear that it will increase the tonnage of ships calling in the harbour. It seems that Muslims refused to unload boxes containing pork; to avoid being outdone Hindus refused in their turn to bring down boxes of beef. To prevent such extremes we suggest all boxes be marked "milk."

E. Gathier

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